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ABSTRACT

The Windsor Central School District Leadership Team in rural upstate New York, as charged by the State Education Commissioner, addressed issues of improving student outcomes by defining exit goals and outcomes for high school students to accomplish by the time they graduate. In addition to developing these goals and outcomes, the team also decided that assessment procedures needed to be as "real world" as the standards students were expected to achieve. This document contains a description of the development of the goals and outcomes and the "Standards of Excellence" package. The standards package consists of three main parts. The first part contains a list of exit goals and outcomes for seven areas: communication, quality of life, socialization, basic skills, intellectual skills, leadership skills, and occupational skills. While these are exit goals for the 12th grader, it is understood that their development begins much earlier. Evaluation of these goals and outcomes will take place in grades 2, 5, 8, and 10. This section also contains examples of tasks that are designed to assess the different goals and outcomes, including examples of tasks for the benchmarks of the earlier grades. Part 2 contains a scoring guide to determine levels of achievement on the tasks, and Part 3 is an introduction to record keeping. A sheet that provides a format for recording the progress of students is included. (SLD)

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ED 426 149

STANDARDS OF EXCELLENCE
Toward Becoming
A Successful Citizen

WINDSOR CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

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Prepared by the
District Leadership Team
July, 1996

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Standards of Excellence
Toward Becoming a Successful Citizen

The Windsor Central School District Leadership Team (DLT), in rural upstate New York, as charged by the State Education Commissioner, addressed issues of improving student outcomes. The team held the beliefs that all students can learn; time is a key variable for learning; methods to achieve outcomes may vary; and that all students should exit high school prepared for work or higher education. Focusing on the District's Mission statement, the team decided that they would concentrate their efforts on behaviors and skills that would enable students to be successful citizens. The team felt that the academic goals attainment was adequately addressed in the district but the skills and attitudes that really matter in the adult world, as gleaned from the community, needed some focused attention.[1]

Though consensus, a list of exit goals and outcomes was developed for high school students to accomplish by the time they graduated. The list and its accompanying components came to be called The Standards of Excellence. It was resolved students would have to achieve a functional level on all the elements as part of graduation requirements.

These behaviors and skills did not take long to generate because the group of community and school stakeholders had clear, if not always congruent, ideas of what a graduate from Windsor schools should be like. They wanted to insure that students could perform not only in the classroom but in the "real world" and would receive direct instruction on this throughout their schooling in Windsor. There are seven major areas of behaviors to be acquired: Communication; Quality of Life; Socialization; Basic Skills; Intellectual Skills; Leadership Skills; and Occupational Skills. Under each area there are several enabling outcomes ranging in number from three to fourteen.

In addition to developing the exit goals and outcomes the team also decided that the assessment procedures needed to be as "real world" as the standards the students were expected to achieve. These procedures must have value beyond the classroom and be meaningful to the learner.[2] Therefore the team abandoned traditional notions about testing and evaluation and spent much time in training and preparation to develop authentic assessments. This work resulted in a series of tasks directly tied to the outcomes that would allow a student to demonstrate attainment of the knowledge or skill. In preparing these examples the DLT members tried to be equitable in accommodating learning styles and acknowledging multiple ways of demonstrating competence. The team intended that the tasks would be closely aligned with the curriculum and would connect thinking and doing, theory and practice in authentic contexts. They also recognized that it would be the purvey of the individual classroom teachers to create the actual assessment tasks but that it would be helpful to provide a sample to guide them.

To score the tasks, sample responses at each level (Emerging; Functional; Independent) were provided as exemplars to aid in scoring and development of other level responses. A scoring rubric

was also supplied to provide additional assistance in determining evidence of student learning.

The DLT believed that time was a variable in learning and that students needed time to achieve a functional level on all the exit goals and outcomes. Therefore, the Standards of Excellence would guide instruction K-12. To monitor students' progress toward the functional level, benchmarks at Grades two, five, eight, and ten would be recorded and reviewed to ensure that a student was progressing adequately or perhaps needed remedial work to achieve the desired level.

This, then is the basic document, developed by the DLT to improve student achievement. Implementation is taking place in a three-year pilot program in an elementary school where the teachers have aligned their curriculum to help students achieve these Standards..

1. Survey Results.(Spring 1992). Windsor, NY: Windsor Central School District.

2. Kerka, Sandra .(1995). "Techniques for Authentic Assessment". Practice Application Brief. Columbus, Ohio:ERIC Clearinghouse on Adult, Career, and Vocational Education.

Foreword

Four years ago the District Leadership Team decided they wanted to formalize skills that graduates of the Windsor Central School District should possess. These skills encompass the academic standards that have long been in place.

The following pages present an outline of what is expected of our students and contain examples of how the students will be evaluated.

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Introduction

The Standards of Excellence package consists of three main parts. The first part contains a list of exit goals and outcomes for seven areas — communication, quality of life, socialization, basic skills, intellectual skills, leadership skills, and occupational skills. Each of these areas include exit goals and outcomes. While these goals and outcomes are written with 12th graders in mind, it is understood that they will guide instruction at all grade levels. To this end, evaluation of these goals and outcomes will take place at second, fifth, eighth and tenth grades, while recognizing that assessment can and will take place at all grade levels. The outcomes are listed numerically, but are done so only to correspond to the enclosed record sheet.

Part one of this package contains examples of tasks that are designed to assess the different goals and outcomes. There are sample tasks for each of the exit goal skill areas—although a task can also be used to assess different exit goal skill areas. The tasks have been designed to meet the individual skills included in the exit goal skill areas. These are examples of tasks to be used at the benchmarks of second, fifth, eighth, and tenth grades to determine the student's level on the exit goals. The actual tasks will be designed by the faculty.

Part two contains a scoring guide that is used to determine levels of achievement on the tasks. The guide will be used to determine whether a student is at the emerging, functional, or independent level on the exit goals and outcomes. The functional level is the acceptable standard.

Part three is an introduction to record keeping. It contains a sheet that provides a format for recording the progress of students. Comments regarding the level of achievement in each of the seven exit goal skill areas will be recorded here.

PART I

Exit Goals and Outcomes

I. Communication

A. Exit Goals —

- A graduate will be able to clearly express ideas and feelings to others.
- A graduate will be able to communicate through self-expression via written and oral language skills.
- A graduate will be able to exhibit listening skills.

B. Exit Outcomes —

The graduate will be able to:

1. write a letter and get a response;
2. ask for and receive information;
3. speak in front of a group;
4. use technology appropriately;
5. use visual aspects of communication;
6. follow oral directions;
7. repeat precisely another's position;
8. use at least two different methods of expressing the same idea;
9. effectively express feelings;
10. write a position paper;
11. write a technical paper;

B. Exit Outcomes — (continued)

12. prepare resumes;

13. effectively prepare for interviews; and

14. utilize resources available for grammar and style.

C. Standards of Excellence —

The graduate will score at the functional level on the tasks for communications.

Examples of Tasks

The following are illustrative tasks:

Communication

GRADES K-2
The student will create and present a play based on a story.

Emerging:	The student will have a part and know what it is.
Functional:	The student will know lines of play and enter at appropriate times.
Independent:	The student will develop scenery and use creative dramatics.

GRADES 3-5
Groups of students will debate a position related to a current unresolved problem.

Emerging:	The students will state the issue.
Functional:	The students will state the issue and their position, and give minimal support to position.
Independent:	The students will provide substantial support with multiple examples using research.

Communication - (continued)

GRADES 6-8

The student will choose an aspect of our society that can be affected by the Olympic Games; make an oral presentation supported by multi-media materials; and describe an effect the Olympic Games can have on some aspect of society.

Emerging:	The student will state the aspect and one effect.
Functional:	The student will write a report giving three examples to support effect.
Independent:	The student will make an oral presentation supported by two or more forms of media.

GRADES 9-12

The student will choose a controversial topic in any subject area and present their position in oral and written form. The presentation must:

1. **inform others about the topic;**
2. **take a definite position and defend it;**
3. **support that position with facts and evidences documented with information obtained from current sources, one of which is in response to a letter;**
4. **express the opposition's point of view precisely;**
5. **use at least two different methods and two forms of technology in expressing the same idea;**
6. **effectively express his/her feelings about both sides of the controversy; and**
7. **use proper forms of grammar and style.**

Emerging:	The student will complete assignment.
Functional:	The student will complete assignment satisfactorily.
Independent:	The student will apply the assignment in other aspects of their life.

II. Quality of Life

A. Exit Goals —

- A graduate will be knowledgeable about concepts of wellness. This will include an awareness of a balanced lifestyle.
- A graduate will be able to exhibit high self-esteem, be a critical thinker, and possess problem-solving skills.
- A graduate will be able to exhibit caretaking/parenting skills.

B. Exit Outcomes —

The graduate will be:

1. knowledgeable about health issues;
2. physically fit;
3. a participant in potentially lifelong activities;
4. appreciative of the arts;
5. involved in and complete constructive group activities;
6. active in establishing and keeping healthy relationships;
7. knowledgeable about personal strengths and limitations;
8. able to successfully complete courses which have critical thinking and problem-solving skills as an integrated part of the curriculum; and
9. able to use coping skills to deal with life situations.

C. Standards of Excellence —

The graduate will score at the functional level on tasks for quality of life.

Examples of Tasks

Quality of Life

GRADES K-2
The students will plan a picnic and include plans for activities, food, and socialization.

Emerging:	The student will plan a picnic with a list of activities.
Functional:	The student will plan and explain the reasoning behind activities.
Independent:	The student will hold the picnic, and explain the planning and reasoning.

GRADES 3-5
The student will design a personal wellness chart.

Emerging:	The student will organize a chart and decide what should be in the chart (what is healthy and what is not, for physical and mental health).
Functional:	The student will explain what is in the chart and why.
Independent:	The student will relate the chart to his or her life.

GRADES 6-8
The students, divided into groups, will create a fitness program. The groups will have different tasks such as planning a fitness trail, writing a nutrition plan, and budgeting materials.

Emerging:	The student will name two or three activities that one could do as part of the fitness program.
Functional:	The student will describe in detail the activities used in a fitness program.
Independent:	The student will explain different kinds of fitness and design a project geared to different levels.

Quality of Life - (continued)

GRADES 9-12
The student will select a family lifelong activity and give an oral presentation on how this affects the economic, social, physical, and mental well-being of the family; eg.: tennis

Emerging:	The student will state the activity and list three effects.
Functional:	The student will present a How To presentation with an explanation of the benefits.
Independent:	The student will be able to participate in a lifelong activity.

III. Socialization

A. Exit Goals —

- A graduate will be able to demonstrate being a positive role model.
- A graduate will work well with all people.
- A graduate will be able to exhibit qualities of understanding, compassion and tolerance.

B. Exit Outcomes —

The graduate will be able to:

1. be respected by peers and elders as shown by assuming responsibilities and leadership positions;
2. maintain good attendance by being where one needs to be and completing tasks in a timely and successful manner;
3. maintain achievement to the best of one's ability;
4. be self-motivated;
5. establish positive priorities;
6. be a team player;
7. understand different viewpoints;
8. accept group goals;
9. share ideas, and materials;
10. maintain positive group interaction; and
11. provide service to others.

C. Standards of Excellence —

The graduate will score at the functional level on tasks of socialization.

Examples of Tasks

Socialization

GRADES K-2
The student will dramatize a situation, (i.e. fairy tale, family meal, holiday celebration, short play, etc.)

Emerging:	The student will assume a role in the dramatization.
Functional:	The student will perform the role properly.
Independent:	The student will improvise his/her role playing.

GRADES 3-5
The students will be divided into small groups (approximately four) and will create a book for publication based on a related topic from the curriculum and present the book to the class. Other recommended related activities: have an author visit the classroom, field trip to a printer, partnership with middle school students.

Emerging:	The student will create a basic story by webbing/brainstorming.
Functional:	The student will write the story in narrative form.
Independent:	The student will publish the story, and distribute it to the class.

GRADES 6-8
The students will plan an end-of-year class activity for the grade level involved.

Emerging:	The student will be able to organize simple tasks; present isolated ideas; be a cooperative worker, a good listener, and have good peer relationships.
Functional:	The student will demonstrate multi-level organization with connected planning; the student will be a good communicator and a group leader.

Socialization - (continued)

Independent:	The student will demonstrate unlimited organizational skills, independent planning, and continuing motivation; the student will be a large group leader and problem-solver.

GRADES 9-12

The student will become an active and positive functioning member of a group, assume a positive role model in that group and demonstrate the qualities of compassion, consideration and understanding. The group should be either an approved school or community organization whose purpose is to serve the other members of the general population.

Emerging:	The student will list which organizations exist and the purpose of those organizations; the student will explain what is expected of him or her to participate in that group; the student can explain how the group serves other people; the student can complete a simple application questionnaire.
Functional:	The student will identify people that the group is designed to assist; the student will organize his/her time and resources; the student will identify a goal or task that has to be achieved; the student can complete the task and purpose of a service organization working with direction and supervision.
Independent:	The student will identify and seek out people who may benefit from the service of the group; the student will apply what is learned in the service group to other aspects of his or her life; the student will help those targeted for assistance beyond the parameters or directions given.

IV. Basic Skills

A. Exit Goals —

- A graduate will be able to acquire and utilize information concerning organizations, services, and the technology involved in personal day-to-day living.

B. Exit Outcomes —

The graduate will be able to:

1. successfully complete requirements for a high school education;
2. be a contributing participant to in-school and out-of-school activities;
3. use a variety of technological devices;
4. use logical sequence in making decisions;
5. find a piece of information using a variety of resources;
6. exhibit good oral and written expression; and
7. be an informed consumer.

C. Standards of Excellence —

The graduate will score at the functional level on tasks for basic skills.

Examples of Tasks

Basic Skills

GRADES K-2
The student will plan, prepare, and serve a holiday party or meal.

EMERGING: The student will plan a party or meal as evidenced by producing a menu and list of guests to be invited.

Basic Skills - (continued)

FUNCTIONAL: The student will plan a party or meal which is representative of the occasion as evidenced through the selection and preparation of appropriate foods.

INDEPENDENT: The student will create a written invitation, which will include the menu, to be sent to invited guests.

GRADES 3-5
The student will write a report on a specific research topic; examples: county or school government, a state, sport or country.

EMERGING: The student will compile and list facts, and look up information.

FUNCTIONAL: The student will write a report or speech with teacher assistance.

INDEPENDENT: The student will proofread his/her report and make corrections. The student will write or present information that is in an acceptable form.

GRADES 6-8
The student will create and conduct a survey regarding a community need, i.e. swimming pool, grocery store, emergency services, and present the findings.

EMERGING: The student will have a minimal number of questions and survey a few people. The student will then be able to tell if the need is warranted or not.

FUNCTIONAL: The student will survey a moderate number of people and ask appropriate questions.

INDEPENDENT: The student will survey a substantial number of people of various ages and occupations and will develop numerous questions. The presentation will describe conclusions with supporting data.

Basic Skills - (continued)

GRADES 9-12
The student will graduate.
The student will be a member of a school/out of school activity.
The student will present an oral and written presentation on an authentic subject using at least four different sources of information. The sources of information must be different, i.e. books vs. Databases. The presentation must include at least two technological devices.

EMERGING:	The student will be a participant or hold membership.
	The student will give a report that is minimally acceptable.
FUNCTIONAL:	The student will earn a Local Diploma.
	The student will have documented successful accomplishment.
	The student will present a report that is at a satisfactory level.
INDEPENDENT:	The student will be an honor student, and earn a Regents Diploma.
	The student will hold a leadership role in an activity.
	The student will present a high level report.

V. Intellectual

A. Exit Goal —

A graduate will be able to display independent logical thinking.

B. Exit Outcomes —

The graduate will be able to:

1. think independently and logically;
2. seek and analyze information;
3. explore possible solutions;
4. form conclusions; and
5. implement a plan of action.

C. Standards of Excellence —

The graduate will score at the functional level on tasks for intellectual skills.

Examples of Tasks

Intellectual

GRADES K-2
The student will read a story, see a play, video, or movie and produce a project based on the theme of the chosen selection.

EMERGING:	The student will accurately retell the theme in sequential order.
FUNCTIONAL:	The student will choose an appropriate project which illustrates the theme of their chosen selection (such as puppets, dioramas, letters, bookmarks, mobiles, etc.).
INDEPENDENT:	The student will locate and organize materials to produce the finished project.

Intellectual - (continued)

GRADES 3-5
Given a problem the student will be able to use a variety of resources to find a solution.

EMERGING:	The student will recognize or identify the problem.
FUNCTIONAL:	The student will note the information on paper.
INDEPENDENT:	The student will conduct and present independent research. The final copy will be polished (proofread) and will have workable solutions.

GRADES 6-8
The students will play the stock market game: each student is given a beginning stake to be invested in the stock market.

EMERGING:	The student will randomly select a stock. The student will successfully follow the stock.
FUNCTIONAL:	The student will do a moderate amount of investigation before buying stocks and attempts to trace history in order to predict likely growth.
INDEPENDENT:	The student will make purchases and sales to maximize growth and will explain his/her reasons.

GRADES 9-12
The student will prepare a career plan in which the plan is developed logically and suited to the skills and talents of the student. The student will analyze the information available, possible career paths, education skills and resources needed. The student will form conclusions as to possible careers for him/her and a plan of action towards achieving that career.

EMERGING:	The student will choose a career plan.
FUNCTIONAL:	The student will develop a viable plan.
INDEPENDENT:	The student will start to take steps toward achievement of the plan.

VI. Leadership

A. Exit Goal —

A graduate will be able to understand and demonstrate leadership skills.

B. Exit Outcomes —

The graduate will convey a sense of vision and develop commitment toward a goal by:

1. being fair to all persons;
2. proactive and positive behaviors without coercion;
3. delegating tasks and sharing authority;
4. demonstrating energy; enthusiasm and a positive attitude;
5. considering constructive suggestions;
6. modeling citizenship and good school representation; and
7. understanding responsibility and accountability.

C. Standards of Excellence —

The graduate will score at the functional level on tasks for leadership skills.

Examples of Tasks

Leadership

GRADES K-2
A group of students will be assigned the responsibility of organizing and managing a class store (e.g. grocery, office, book).

EMERGING:	The students will be present in the store and know their job assignments.
FUNCTIONAL:	The students will actively engage in their job responsibilities to create a realistic store environment and provide leadership to others in this group activity.

Leadership - (continued)

INDEPENDENT: The students will evaluate the operation of the store and modify the environment to provide for improvement.

GRADES 3-5
During P.E. class the student will accept the role of rotating captain.

EMERGING: The student will accept the role without understanding responsibility.

FUNCTIONAL: The student will learn the responsibility and work with the teacher.

INDEPENDENT: The student will accept the responsibility and carry it out independently.

GRADES 6-8
The student will engage in any cooperative learning task that requires students to prioritize materials or processes.

EMERGING: The student will participate in a group effort without coercion.

FUNCTIONAL: The student will contribute to the group dynamics and offer reasons for their contributions.

INDEPENDENT: The student will voluntarily assume a leadership position drawing others into the discussion.

GRADES 9-12
The student will engage in a cooperative learning project relative to a specific course of study in which the exit outcomes are evaluated by the teacher and/or peers.

EMERGING: The student will complete the activity.

FUNCTIONAL: The student will complete the activity and have it accepted by most raters.

INDEPENDENT: The student will complete the activity and have it receive an exceptional rating.

VII. Occupational

A. Exit Goal —

A graduate will be able to successfully enter the workplace and adapt to changing needs.

B. Exit Outcomes —

The graduate will:

1. demonstrate the attributes of a successful employee such as good attendance, a positive attitude, peer and employer relationships, etc.;

2. prepare for employment through developing a resume and interview skills and performing a job search; and

3. demonstrate an ability and willingness to adapt to changing needs.

C. Standards of Excellence —

The graduate will score at the functional level on tasks of occupational skills.

Examples of Tasks

Occupational

GRADES K-2
The students will be assigned class jobs on a weekly basis.

EMERGING:	The student will locate his/her job description and understand his/her job responsibilities.
FUNCTIONAL:	The student will perform job responsibilities with consistent effort.
INDEPENDENT:	The student will assume additional responsibilities related to their job assignment.

Occupational - (continued)

GRADES 3-5
The students will operate a school store.

EMERGING: The students will operate the store with regular supervision.

FUNCTIONAL: The students will operate the school store with supervision.

INDEPENDENT: The students will operate the school store with little or no supervision.

GRADES 6-8
The student will complete an interest inventory on occupations and then research the requirements for obtaining the job, salary, etc., and write a letter of application.

EMERGING: The student will write a letter requesting the position.

FUNCTIONAL: The student will write a letter of application which demonstrates a knowledge of the qualifications of the position.

INDEPENDENT: The student will write a letter of application and enclose a resume.

GRADES 9-12
The student will keep a personal journal during his or her 10th grade in which the attributes of a successful employee are listed and documented. Two of the student's teachers will periodically review and certify the journal.

EMERGING: The student's record of absences and problems will be kept.

FUNCTIONAL: The student will have adequate attendance and behavior.

INDEPENDENT: The student will have excellent attendance, and a positive attitude towards solving problems.

PART II

INTRODUCTION TO THE SCORING GUIDE

The scoring guide is designed to help teachers assess the basic tasks for the exit goal skill areas. It is to provide questions to ask about the task output to determine whether the student is at the emerging, functional, or independent level on a specific exit goal skill area.

To use the scoring guide start checking for completion of the statements at the emerging level. If all of the statements have been met, then move to the functional level. If the statements are completed, then move to the independent level. The student has obtained the level indicated when all of the answers are yes. The goal is to have the student perform at least at the functional level.

SCORING GUIDE

Emerging Levels	*Functional Levels*	*Independent Level*
The student will provide basic responses to the assessment.	The student will demonstrate an adequate understanding of the task.	The student will make judgments, connections, and extensions of the task that are supported with evidence.
The student will demonstrate a basic understanding of the task.	The student will adequately connect ideas and information to show structure to his/her thinking.	The student will make obvious connections to his/her life to the task and provide evidence for the connections.
The student will use basic inferences that are connected to the task.	The student will adequately relate the task to personal experiences.	The student will make several deductions with justification.
The student will provide basic information related to the task.	The student will provide an extension of the task.	
The student will make basic judgments related to the task.	The student will make logical judgments of the task and support them.	
	The student will identify the processes that must be performed in order to complete the task.	

PART III

INTRODUCTION TO RECORD KEEPING

These tasks are designed to be part of a portfolio of achievement that will follow the student throughout his/her time in the Windsor Central School system. Progress on completing the tasks will be kept on a record sheet that shows whether the student demonstrated skill at the emerging, functional, or independent levels. Evidence of the tasks will be kept in a portfolio which will be returned to the student at the benchmark grades. Areas not assessed at any benchmark will be left blank.

The record sheet with the performance assessments on the tasks will be kept through the 13 years of schooling. The portfolio will be given to the student upon graduation.

SAMPLE RECORD SHEET FOR BENCHMARKS

Name: *Susie Q.*

Grade: *5th Grade*

EXIT OUTCOMES

Communication	Quality of Life	Socialization	Basic Skills
1. *Functional*	1.	1.	1.
2. *Functional*	2.	2.	2. *Independent*
3. *Functional*	3.	3.	3.
4. *Functional*	4. *Functional*	4.	4.
5. *Functional*	5. *Functional*	5.	5.
6. *Functional*	6. *Functional*	6.	6.
7. *Functional*	7.	7.	7.
8. *Emerging*	8.	8.	
9. *Functional*	9.	9.	
10. *Emerging*		10.	
11. *Emerging*		11.	
12. *Emerging*		12.	
13. *Functional*			
14. *Functional*			

Intellectual	Leadership	Occupational
1.	1. *Emerging*	1.
2.	2. *Functional*	2.
3.	3.	3.
4.	4.	
5.	5.	
	6.	
	7.	

Comments:

TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

EXIT GOAL: the aim—the description of what we want our students to be like when they graduate.

EXIT OUTCOMES: the objectives that they must complete in order to demonstrate that they have achieved the goals.

STANDARDS OF EXCELLENCE: those levels or criteria at which the students must complete the objectives in order to graduate.

TASK: the opportunity for the student to perform, create, produce, or do something that would indicate that the desired behaviors have been achieved.

THE LEVEL OF EXCELLENCE:

⇒ **EMERGING** beginning to complete the task
⇒ **FUNCTIONAL** has completed the task
⇒ **INDEPENDENT** has internalized the process of the task

BENCHMARKS: the times at which we assess the student's progress toward the goal. (at the 2nd, 5th, 8th, and 10th grade levels)

DLT:kw:*Standard*
7/23/96:10/7/96